

# Editorial

## Joubert gets just sentence

I confess to being one of those so-called bleeding hearts when it comes to these matters concerning capital punishment and the like. However, for the first time, I believe the Nebraska judicial system passed a just sentence when they issued their latest cell on Death Row.

In a larger sense, I don't believe the death penalty serves as a deterrent. No one has proven at anytime that because one man is executed, crime drops. But in John Joubert's case, it becomes more of a matter of what can you do to the individual, not what you can do as an example.

Revenge is an easy crutch for most favoring arguments on the death penalty. As the judges in the Joubert case said, they tried to see the case through the eyes of the victims. You would have to go pretty far before you found anyone who wasn't emotionally disturbed by Joubert's crime. It would easily follow that those same emotions could be channeled into revenge against the perpetrator.

But what can society do for felons such as Joubert who have no remorse for a crime, no reason for it? The death sentence is too cruel, too much like answering a wrong with a wrong. An irreversible life sentence is also too cruel, too un-

fair, being that it deprives the man of any chance for freedom even if he rehabilitates. And, the current status of a life sentence could mean he at least is eligible for parole and that's too good for him.

Joubert didn't just stumble upon two Bellevue boys and accidentally kill them. He was, and is, a cold, calculating murderer, who didn't see fit to allow two children to live their lives. There is the problem as well of tax dollars supporting an imprisoned criminal, and the fact that some of these men are so immersed in the criminal world that they are beyond reform. A man who slaughtered two innocent boys would have to be considered in such a category.

When (if ever) Joubert is executed, there is no reason to believe an equally depraved mind would hesitate to rape or kill given the opportunity. But doesn't Joubert deserve some penalty for his actions?

When other sentences have been handed down that condemned a man to death, I considered it no more than a useless eye for an eye. But it is difficult, if not impossible, to feel sorry for Joubert. As long as the state sees fit to have the death penalty in its status, this is a prime example of a deserving candidate.

**Ward W. Triplett III**  
Daily Nebraskan Senior Editor



## Letters

### Death penalty law involves facts, not emotions

In Jeff Browne's editorial, "State needs irreversible life sentence," he stated: "If we had an irreversible life sentence society would not have the blood of another human being on its hands." In the same article he also stated, "State law needs to be changed to take these emotional issues out of sentencing." These statements seem to be contradictory to each other.

I agree that the decision to hand down a death penalty should

not be an emotional one. The decision handed down by the three judges was based on a law that says the aggravating and mitigating circumstances must be balanced against each other. This law is the result of a U.S. Supreme Court decision in recent years. Nebraska's law concerning the death penalty deals with circumstances surrounding the murder, not emotional issues.

We already have a life sentence in Nebraska. To be released, a

"lifer" must face the parole board. The parole board considers the behavior of the criminal while incarcerated and determines if he is fit to be released into society.

Nebraska does not need an irreversible life sentence. The death penalty is a just and fair sentence, and an integral part of our justice system in Nebraska.

**Brad Stepp**  
Junior  
natural resources

### U.S. officials listen to clink of coins, not vote

I would like to respond to the editor's simplistic commentary, "If you don't vote, don't complain." (Page 4, of Wednesday's Daily Nebraskan.) First, let's dispense with any notion of equal participation in the election process.

Not everyone over 18 in the United States has the chance to vote. Hundreds of thousands of homeless people in our cities cannot even register because they do

not have an address. Do these people have the right to complain? For those of us who do have a home, our voting privilege has become more a gesture than a means of change.

The political weight of a single ballot has been diminished in recent years. It costs millions to be elected President and hundreds of thousands for a congressional race. The bulk of this money is

not donated by the average American, but by wealthy individuals. Political action committees are playing an ever increasing role in determining the outcome of elections.

The Federal Election Commission says that corporate PACs alone have multiplied by more than 17 times since 1974. Their money is given as an "incentive"

Continued on Page 5

## Editorial Policy

Unsigned editorials represent the official policy of the fall 1984 Daily Nebraskan. They are written by this semester's editor in chief, Chris Welsch.

Editorials do not necessarily reflect the views of the university.

its employees, the students or the NU Board of Regents.

According to the policy set by the regents, responsibility for the content of the newspaper lies solely in the hands of its student editors.

## Campus Quotes

Are you better off now than you were four years ago?



**Dannie Dearing**  
Student Teacher  
Elementary Education  
"Yea, because of what he's (Reagan) doing for farmers. He's supporting more of the farming programs, giving us more options."



**Steven Mitchell**  
Senior  
Chemistry  
"No, it seems to me like the price of education is always going up, like all I've been doing is paying for school... The chances of getting an education if you're not financially well off are very slim."



**Harold Carmichael**  
Junior  
Political Science  
"I guess as far as Reagan's foreign policy is concerned, I think I'm better off... Soon we'll have plenty of snow to ski on year-round, nuclear fallout, you know?"



**Rod Brown**  
Sophomore  
Political Science  
"Yes. Because of military spending, they gave everybody raises, across the board. It helped me because I'm in the Army Reserve."



**Judy Harrington**  
Junior  
Nursing  
"I think there's a definite awareness of the need to support the man in office and the country. We aren't perfect, but we're better off than what a lot of people have."